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The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

No. 382.

AUGUST, 1938.

SINCERITY ENTHUSIASM UNDERSTANDING.

PSALM CXIX, 1. "Blessed are the sincere."

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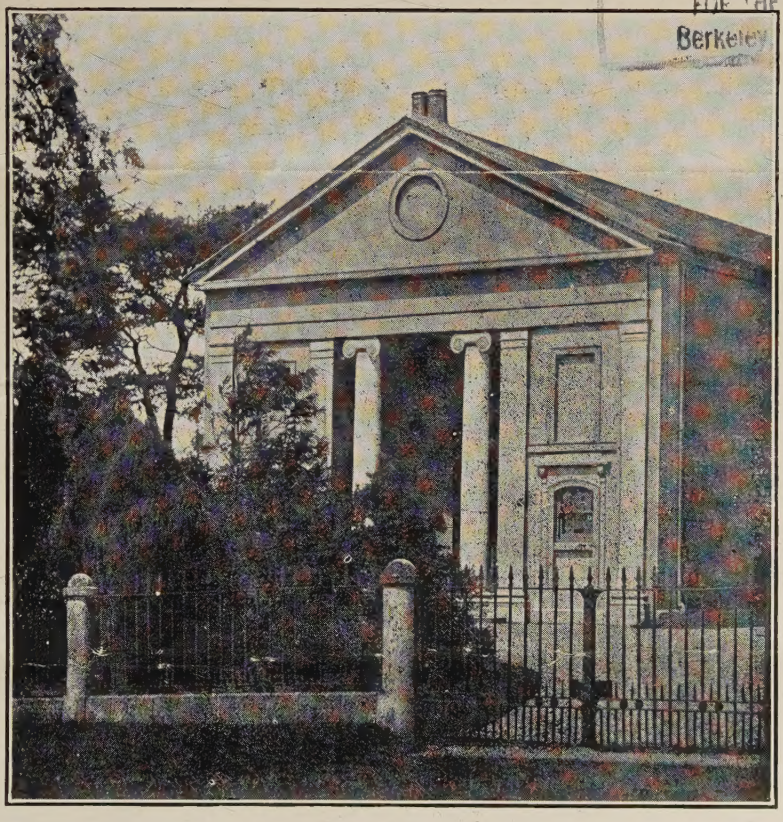

CLOUGH NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIAN MEETING HOUSE.

NOTES AND NEWS.

A few years ago, we regarded religious persecution as something largely of the distant past, and what might still remain of it in the world, a mere echo which in the future would fade away and be silenced; but, now we find ourselves in a time of disillusionment, wondering what has been the worth of all the talk about progress and increasing happiness and mutual goodwill among the nations. At the same time we have faith that these ideals obscured as they may be at present, will come to fruition; but, the testing is severe.

* * *

It is with regret that we learn that in Belgium, where such a noble stand was taken for liberty at the outbreak of the Great War, a virulent attack on Freemasonry is being carried on. Certain newspapers have opened their pages to these attacks and several firms have been ruined in consequence of this campaign, the term Freemason being used as an accusation against government officials, burgomasters, etc.

In Europe this wave of intolerance is gathering force against Freemasonry and religion In Poland membership of a Masonic Lodge will be punishable with five years imprisonment, if a certain Bill became law. The Nazi persecution, with the annexation by Germany has been extended to Austria, and in Rumania a new "Safety Law" has been published, which will press hardly upon communities of liberal religious views

* * *

For the first time in history at the beginning of June in the Senate Hall of Edinburgh University, a Masonic Lodge of graduates and members of the University, whose regular place of meeting is in London, under the English constitution, met with the consent of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. A presentation was made to the English Lodge of a new charity box made from an oak-beam of the examination hall. Panels showed historic buildings in Edinburgh, and fragments of rock from the castle and marble from Iona were worked into it, surmounted by a replica of the University dome, the figure on the top being Scottish gold. A collection was taken for the Scottish Orphan Fund.

* * *

The 321st meeting of the Ministers' Conference was held on Monday, June 27th, 1938, when Mr. and Mrs. McCleery of Raloo Manse were host and hostess. There was a very good attendance, the Rev. J. G. Sparham of Lewin's Mead, Bristol, was present as guest of the Conference, and the Rev. C. J. Montgomery, M.A. of Holywood took his place for the first time as a member. The subject of discussion which was introduced was based on the book: "Psychology and Morals" by J. A. Hadfield, M.A., M.B., Ch.B., being based upon lectures at Mansfield College, Oxford, dealing with Psychology in relation to healing as in the methods of Psychotherapy. Other items which were of interest were touched upon. The ministers viewed the Meeting House, which is undergoing alterations and repairs. A very sumptuous tea was provided and the host and hostess were heartily thanked. Notwithstanding showers of rain, the afternoon was very enjoyable.

* * *

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* * *

PULPIT SUPPLY.—The Rev. W. Eakin, 103 Greenore Street, Belfast.

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The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian can be obtained at the Depository, 35 Rosemary Street, Belfast.

SUBSIDY FUND.

Contributions should be addressed to Rev. A. Davison, Dromore, by whom they will be gratefully acknowledged.

THE DIVINE WISDOM.

John X. 34. "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, Ye are gods'?"

Psalm LXXXII, 6. "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High."

"We cannot help you save by your own willing. We cannot give to you while your hands are clenched against the gift.

None can open the door of the human soul save the owner; who alone has a right to the key.

But we bear you witness that the gateway to the higher is open and only yourself can prevent the treading. Come with us then, brethren, to those Higher Lands, but remember you must leave the lower self behind."A.B.

NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIANS

ANNUAL MEETINGS.

The annual meetings of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland were held in Belfast, on 21st and 22nd June.

In the Central Hall, Rosemary Street, Belfast, the Rev. E. Savell Hicks, M.A., delivered a public lecture on "Inspiration." There was a large audience.

Mr. Hicks said that to speak of inspiration was to invoke the mystic panorama of that which lay beyond the ordinary ambit of the natural senses, and to raise the whole question of the inter-action of the Divine and human, the spiritual and the material, the so-called natural and the so-called supernatural. He proceeded to examine the differences of outlook as far as the reign of law and order, and the theory of continual Divine interference were concerned, and pointed out that a great many things which their forefathers considered to be the result of direct Divine action had now passed into the scope of what was called natural law.

While in days gone by they were inclined to fight epidemics with prayer and sacrifice and in sackcloth and ashes, modern man fought them with disinfectant, innoculations and sanitary inspectors. Much the same process had gone on in regard to the mental and spiritual life of man, and there had also been a steady growth in the conception of law and order, cause and effect.

Human psychology had made very great strides in recent years, but he warned his hearers against imagining that they had explained something mysterious when they had attacked a new label and a nice long name to it. The subconscious mind and the subliminal self undoubtedly explained many things, but they were not by any means the end of mystery.

Inspiration was not to be considered from the modern point of view as limited to one age, one book, one nation or one creed. Thoughts of true beauty and very deep and real religious depths were not the peculiar possession of any one section or age.

Taking human history or human development as having expanded as modern science informed them it had, over a period of at least one million years, it was not conceivable that the Creator of the world had left it in ignorance for 999,000 years and then suddenly decided to have a series of revelations extending roughly over 1,000 years in one very small portion of the earth's surface, and had then been content to let it alone for the rest of time. Revelation knew no boundaries, no favoured nations and no cradled divisions.

A vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Hicks, on the motion of Rev. A. G. Peaston, Templepatrick.

A proposal to merge the association in the Non-Subscribing Church of Ireland was adopted.

OFFICE-BEARERS.

At the annual meeting of the association of Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterians, held in First Presbyterian Church in the afternoon, Rev. E. Savell Hicks was re-elected president; Rev. John Begg, Larne, was appointed secretary, and Rev. J. Glynne Davies, Comber, hon. treasurer.

The following new governors were elected to the Orphan Society:—Rev. D. J. Williams, Killinchy; Rev. J. J. Magill, Rademon; Mr. F. A. Robinson, Holywood; and Mr. R. Martin, Belfast.

At the 109th annual meeting of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, which was held subsequently, the Rev. John Barron, Ballyhemlin, was installed Moderator in succession to Rev. J. A. Kelly, Dunmurry. Rev. J. McCleery, Newry, was appointed clerk; Rev. J. Hinkins, Crumlin, assistant clerk, and Rev. J. Glynne Davies, treasurer.

MEETING OF GENERAL SYNOD.

The business meeting of the General Synod was preceded this morning by a Communion service in First Presbyterian Church, which was conducted by the Moderator (Rev. E. Savell Hicks, M.A.), assisted by Rev. J. Glynne Davies and Rev. J. D. Davies.

At the meeting of the Synod Rev. E. Savell Hicks was re-elected Moderator; Rev. J. D. Davies was re-elected clerk, and Rev. J. Glynne Davies was re-elected hon. trasurer.

Presbytery reports were submitted from Antrim, Bangor and Templepatrick, and the Synod of Munster report was presented by Mr. W. A. Wetherall.

Rev. J. Glynne Davies presented the Sunday school report.

All these showed continued progress.

The Conversazione was held in the Central Hall, on Wednesday evening. Proceedings began with the Reception at 7-30. By 8 o'clock it was seen that a larger audience than usual had assembled and was fairly representative.

The speakers of the evening were the Moderator, the Rev. E. Savell Hicks, M.A., who presided, and the Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A., D.D.

A most enjoyable programme of songs and recitations was provided by Miss Eileen Ervine, contralto; Mr. James Laird, baritone; Mrs. Hutchison, elocutionist, with Miss Kennedy as accompanist. The ladies of the Women's League were responsible for the catering which was excellent.

Mr. W. J. Baxter, Dromore, in moving a vote of thanks to the speakers, the artistes, the ladies of the Women's League and the congregation of the First Church, congratulated the Moderator on his re-election and expressed appreciation of the excellent service he had rendered during the past year .

This was seconded by Mr. F. Robinson, Holywood.

Proceedings closed with the singing of the National Anthem.

THE OPEN BIBLE.

The royal order which four hundred years ago was issued requiring that a Bible in the English language should be set up in every Cathedral and Parish Church in England was issued in June, 1538, as follows:—

"Ye shall provyde on this side of the feast next commyng, one boke of the whole Bible of the largest volume in Englyshe, and the same sett up in summe convenyant place within the said churche that ye have care of, whereas your parishioners may most commodiouslye resort to the same and rede yt."

COMBER NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

CENTENARY.

In the year 1836, a small group of liberal-minded and progressive men and women in Comber came together and resolved to form a congregation which would be free from dogmatic test and from subscription to any written creed. They believed in the Fatherhood of God and in the love that covereth all God's children on this earth. The theory of election and pre-destination which was given such emphasis in the preaching of that day seemed to them to be at variance, with the love of God which Jesus taught and which He revealed so divinely in His life.

The belief in the eternal punishment, at the hand of God, of any human soul was unbelieveable to them, for it was contrary to their Christian Faith and to their own deepest thought and feeling.

The principal leaders in the new movement were John Miller, Esq., J.P., and James Andrews, Esq. It is gratifying to find among our membership list at the present time the descendants of many of those who took a prominent part in the formation of the new congregation—such as Andrews, Davidson, Frame, Ferguson, Simpson, Todd, Milling, and Stewart.

Their first meeting-place was a loft, situated in Killinchy Street. This was fitted out by Mr. John Miller, as a temporary meeting-house. Here is a description of the first Communion service, taken from a manuscript by the late revered the Rev. Thos. Dunkerley, B.A. "In the Communion service, held in the loft, Mr. James Andrews acted as elder —Mr. Miller was accustomed to describe it as a touching sight—to see in that lowly upper-room, the grand old gentleman carrying the elements round, his eyes, the while streaming with tears —It reminds one of the gathering of the first Christians in the Upper-Room."

There we had the spirit of devotion and consecration which led to the growth of the movement and to the building of the stately Church which stands in its spacious and beautiful setting to-day.

The same James Andrews made them

a free gift of the site together with a handsome donation. Other generous gifts followed and the task of Church building began.

On Monday, July 9th, 1838, the Remonstrant Presbytery of Bangor installed the Rev. W. H. Dogherty into the charge of the congregation. The Rev. Dr. Henry Montgomery preached the sermon, which was described as "remarkable for vigorous eloquence."

The Rev. Fletcher Blakely delivered an impressive charge to the minister and people.

After the service the congregation adjourned to the site of the meeting-house. James Andrews, Esq., senior, laid the foundation-stone in the usual manner and addressed the assembly in a few appropriate remarks. He congratulated them on the happy prospect of having a Christian Temple erected for the worship of the One only living and true God, according to His will revealed by Jesus Christ, His only begotten and well-beloved Son, and he admonished them to exercise charity and brotherly love towards all who differed from them in religious sentiment.

The Rev. Dr. Montgomery followed with an inspiring and suitable address. He concluded the interesting services of the day by invoking the Divine blessing upon the important work which they had commenced that day.

In commemoration of that eventful occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of the present building, special services were held on Sunday, July 3rd, 1938. The Moderator of the Church, the Rev. E. Savell Hicks, M.A., of Dublin, was the preacher. Large congregations assembled morning and evening. The preacher was at his best and he delivered two interesting and uplifting addresses. He recalled the story of the past, made noble by the faith and devotion of generations of men and women who worshipped within those sacred walls. Their names are remembered and revered. He rejoiced in the present, with its strong and enthusiastic congregation and its splendid band of young people.

Then he spoke of the future with its duties and responsibilities and urged his hearers to carry up into the future all the faith, loyalty, devotion they could command—and help to write another noble chapter in the history of their beloved Church.

The services were in truth most inspiring—the singing of the hymns was hearty and the special anthems by the choir and the solo by Mrs. Murphy greatly enhanced the helpfulness of the service and we owe them a deep debt of gratitude.

On Saturday, July 9th, the actual date of the anniversary, a Garden Party was held in the Church grounds. We were favoured with fairly good weather—the wind was cold, but the sun shone most of the afternoon, and the guests were able to enjoy the beauty and freshness of the lawns and partake of tea in the open-air. We were delighted to see so many friends from far and near to share in the joy of our Centenary celebrations. The Chairman of Committee, the Right Hon. John M. Andrews, D.L., M.P., extended a cordial welcome to all present. He reminded his audience that the foundation-stone was laid by his great-grandfather and he was happy to say that his own grand-children, though young, were faithful in their attendance at Church.

He referred to the friendly feelings that existed between our congregation and the orthodox Churches in Comber, and the district. This is as it should be, and may many such happy relations continue. The Minister, the Rev. J. G. Davies, added a word of welcome to the visitors and of gratitude to them for coming to join the Comber congregation in the celebration of such a happy birthday.

The party was entertained with a programme of songs and recitations contributed by Mr. W. Magill, the well-known Ulster tenor, and Miss Kirkpatrick, of Killinchy, an elocutionist of great ability and a favourite with audiences everywhere. Both artistes gave of their very best and the audience showed its appreciation by the hearty applause given after each item. The artistes were warmly thanked by the Rev. J. G. Davies ,who brought the proceedings to a close by the pronouncing of the Benediction.

Thus we celebrated the end of a centenary of Church life and activity—grateful for all the blessings of the past,

and ready to enter upon another period with faith and hope in our hearts—and to Him who so fully blessed the generations who prayed and worshipped here —we humbly pray—"God of our fathers, be the God of their succeeding race!"

PRIVILEGES AND BIRTHRIGHTS.

Sermon by Rev. D. J. Williams, at Killinchy, July 3rd, 1938.

Genesis xxv, 32.—"And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die, and what profit shall this birthright be to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob."

There are privileges and rights belonging to us all that cannot be taken away from us, except on account of our own heedlessness or folly. Too ready are the majority of people to forget their privileges as men, in order to get a doubtful advantage, which at least can only be momentary.

This was the case with the careless Esau who was done out of his rights and advantages by the wily Jacob. It was the man's own heedlessness which allowed the most precious thing he was endowed with in this life to be taken from him.

And it was the crafty, the smooth-tongued, the sleek and plausible, who ever go about to enslave the lives and souls of men by offering just at the nick of time a gaudy trinket, the savoury morsel, on whatever thing that takes the eye, enslaves the fancy or tickles the palate. So that out of heedless, simple and unassuming people are made the very ones who unthinkingly sell for paltry, trivial return, the very things they should guard as their honour, and defend with their lives.

Why there should be in this world those who are always liable to be deceived and worsted, and other who are ever going about intent on any chance that may offer, to defraud others out of their rights by giving a shadowy or illusory return, is hard to say. The only possible answer that seems to offer itself, is that those who are not sensible of their privileges, and do not value them when they have them, are not fit to be in charge of any precious thing, and even if they were left unmolested, the undisputed owners of the said rights, they would find some means of burying their talents so that no good would ever come from their possession of them; so that perhaps in a round-about way in the end the world and the right are often served by the crafty who know the value of things and set their full power into action .

Forgetting their privileges and rights and not exercising their powers they soon discover that these have been taken away from them. For, to forget that we are men, and to let "the aim and chief ambition of our time, be but to eat and drink and sleep" is "to let this God-like reason fust in us unus'd," we forget the glory of our birthright, sons of God made in the image of His own eternity.

Better that rights we make so little of, should pass to others, than being neglected they should vanish utterly. How poorly does the race fare, when those trusted with the guidance of affairs are negligent, and cease to be alert to seize their opportunities. Even if it be purely from a selfish motive snatching at opportunities that serve his purpose, the self-centred man fired with his own ambitions, is in a far better case, so far as the true end of his life is concerned, than he who takes no trouble and will not benefit or be benefited, for even selfish ambition means arousing will-power, and gaining force, which give hope that at some time or another great things will be accomplished.

Thus was it, in the case of Esau and Jacob. Esau evidently was not fit to bear the responsibilities of being the head of a race, to map out its destinies. He had not the force of character to rise above the manners and customs and mode of living current at the time. He was only cut out to be the leader of a tribe, a sportsman, a keen hunter. Pattern of his associates and admirers, he would be looked up to as an easy master, a leader with a high sense of honour. He was the very opposite of his brother Jacob; he would not move the world by intrigue, treachery, or diplomacy. He was content to cut a respectable figure in the hunting field

and to do deeds of daring. He hadn't an atom of the politician about him, and little family pride, couldn't understand why his parents objected to his marriage. He was the manly one of the family who showed courage, good feeling, freedom from jealousy, readiness in forgiveness, didn't bear a grudge for long.

What a contrast was Jacob! A pilferer, a coward, a supplanter and a thief. By sharp practice he pilfered from his brother his birthright, the blessing from his father, which conferred on him the privilege of being head of the tribe, the priesthood of the family and the lordship over all his brothers and the servants, which ought to have been strictly reserved for the first-born. The list of wrongs by Jacob upon Esau would have been more than enough to make an insuperable barrier between the two brothers. Deceitful, treacherous, Jacob was a coward, and his cowardice furnished him with wings to flee from his brother's presence. Esau with his generous fine qualities, yet lacked the essential to shape the fortunes of a coming race; he could not rise above his environment. It was sufficient for him to be on a level with the chiefs of tribes round about.

Not so, Jacob. His evil deeds had closed around him, and he had to flee. In his banishment—his enforced absence, he meets with many trials. He has many conflicts of soul. His experiences enlarge his nature, refine and reanimate him. The purifying fire burned out the dross of his nature, and only the pure gold remained, and his soul came forth victorious.

The spiritual growth continues until another conflict and another victory caused the change of name, so that he was called no more—Jacob, or "the supplanter"; but, Israel: for we are told "as a prince had he power with God and with men, for he did prevail."

It is these mighty conflicts of the soul which mark the change towards higher things in human history. Jacob is then the true type of humanity in its sins and weaknesses, its struggles, and its final issue in strength, purification and nobility.

So that if the privileges and rights did not fall to Jacob's share by right of birth, yet through torments, and yearnings and fierce spiritual contests he became worthy of those privileges and he used them well.

Thus in Jacob we find that grand monotheistic faith which shone so resplendent in Abraham, and was renewed in Jacob who became the Israel of God, through communion and spiritual wrestlings.—In taking over the inheritance Jacob made good the promise and built on a sure foundation; viz.:—gave birth to the aspiration of a race, which was only permitted for Abraham to see as in a vision, and to hear of as a promise. Jacob was one of the mighty builders of nations who lay the corner stone on which the building rests.

May we hold fast the privileges, the only things dear, that survive from the past, and though it be with wrestlings "till the break of day" that favours come, may we not surrender but persevere till we prevail.—Amen.

FROM CHINA, 600 B.C.

" It breeds difficulties if the people are not exactly what they are if, even by culture, they go beyond the limits of their station.

"There are three duties that a gentleman holds dear: to banish from his bearing violence and levity, to suit his face to the truth, to banish from his speech, what is low and unseemly—as for temple matters, there are officers to mind them.

"[Wisdom consists in] cultivating propriety towards our fellow citizens, and reverencing spiritual beings while maintaining due reserve (control).

"A gentleman considers what is right, the small man what will pay; the gentleman considers mind, the other desire; the former trusts in justice, the other in favours."

Confucius.

"The young grow up in peril and sometimes fall into unexpected disaster, for there is a river of vice always running, into which it is easy for the ignorant to fall."

REPORTS.

Crumlin.—A well-attended Flower and Scholars' service was held on Sunday, June 26th, in the afternoon. Blooms were plentiful and varied and well displayed. Six of the children sang "Hark the lilies whisper" very sweetly. Mrs. Hinkins distributed a few prizes and in doing so made an appeal to the scholars not to be led by the crowd but to keep loyal to the best. The address on "Culture" was delivered by the minister.

MOUNTPOTTINGER.

Everyone will sympathise with the Rev. and Mrs.. Munford in the trial through which they are going on account of the accident to Mrs. Munford on Monday, June 6th, when at Ballygally she was so unfortunate as to break her leg. We understand improvement is being maintained but long and weary weeks in hospital are ahead until the patient is restored.

Her presence was sorely missed at a Social held in the Schoolroom, on Wednesday, June 8th, for the purpose of extending a welcome to Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Malcolm of Stockport, England, and their daughter, Edith, now Mrs. Elmer D. Hessenmueller of Pittsburg, U.S.A., and to Mrs. McK. Abernethy, formerly Miss Isa Turkington of Moneyrea, and now of Warnambool, Australia, and a member of the Unitarian Church in Melbourne, Victoria.

Before the Malcolm family went to Pittsburg 15 years ago, they were useful and valuable members of the Church, Mr. Malcolm serving on the Church Committee, Mrs. Malcolm on the Women's League Committee and Edith in Choir and Sunday School. Mr. Harold Thomas in a few well chosen words referred to these and other matters when extending on behalf of the congregation a hearty welcome to which Mrs. Hessenmueller in a vivacious speech responded for her parents as well as herself. She gave an interesting resume of the activities of the First Unitarian Church of Pittsburg of which she is obviously a valuable member. She conveyed to the Mountpottinger Congregation a cordial message of greeting from the Minister of the Church and the President and Board of Trustees, and also from the Louise Dilworth Beggs Evening Alliance of Professional and Business Women of which she is vice-president, Program and Friendly Links Secretary for her Branch. In addition Mrs. Hessenmueller was entrusted with a message of friendship and fellowship from the American Alliance of Unitarian Women to the Mountpottinger Branch of the Unitarian Women's League, which Mrs. J. Russell, the Branch Secretary, received and undertook to acknowledge.

Mrs. Edgar Jackson then rose to welcome Mrs. Abernethy but before doing so she expressed on behalf of those present their deep regret for the reason of Mrs. Munford's absence, and their sympathy with both Mr. and Mrs. Munford. In speaking of Mrs. Abernethy, Mrs. Jackson recalled with gratitude the many kindnesses shown to the Mountpottinger Sunday School by her parents who so frequently opened their house and grounds for the S.S. annual summer excursion and of the frequent support offered by all the family at Sales of Work and Harvest Festivals in particular. Mrs. Jackson also spoke of the excellent work Mrs. Abernethy has done in her adopted town of Warnambool for the Unitarian cause, when she opened her own home to the children of sympathisers and taught them along with her own children, the basis of the Unitarian Faith, and then formed an adult circle who hired a hall and held frequent public meetings and services, inviting the Minister of the Melbourne Church, the Rev. William Bottomley to conduct the same. He willingly travelled the double journey of 300 miles and more for the sake of the cause. Mrs. Abernethy also entertained the Rev. Laurence Redfern, who addressed a meeting there on his recent visit to Australia.

Mrs. Abernethy responded with a delightful speech, in which she conveyed from the Melbourne Church fraternal greetings and good wishes for the future. As Mr. Bottomley occupied the pulpit of Mountpottinger when he last visited Belfast, this message was warmly received and Mr. E. R. Jackson voiced the feeling of the meeting when he asked Mrs. Abernethy and Mrs. Hessenmueller to carry warmest greetings to

their Churches from the congregation of Mountpottinger Unitarian Church.

Members of the Women's League served a dainty supper, followed by a musical programme which was enjoyed till a late hour, the artistes being Miss Nellie McCullough, Mrs. Edgar Jackson, Mr. Lewis Watters with Lewis, junior, at the piano.

It should be said at this juncture that Lewis, junior, will be greatly missed in Church, Choir and Sunday School when he shortly takes up a position in Chorley, Lancs, and the good wishes of the congregation go with him in his future occupation.

On Sunday, June 12th, the Church presented a delightful appearance decorated for the Floral Services conducted by the Minister, when special music was rendered morning and evening by Miss Elsie McConnell, Miss Evelyn Trimble, Miss Nellie McCullough, Miss Belle Crone (violin), Mr. Alfred Dempster, and the organist, Mr. H. Shepherd.

E.R.J.

First Presbyterian Church, Belfast.—During August the pulpit will be supplied, on the 7th and 14th by the Rev. Frank S. E. Wicks, D.D. (Indianapolis, U.S.A.). 21st Rev. Hugh Warnock, Walsall. 28th Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D.

Moneyrea.—The annual Sunday school excursion took place on Saturday, July 2nd. The party, 106 in number, travelled by buses to Bangor for the day. At first the weather looked doubtful, but improved in the afternoon. Most of the children enjoyed themselves in the Park. The adults preferred going round the shops and along the sea front. At four o'clock an excellent tea was provided in Thompson's Restaurant. When it came to eight o'clock all were ready for the buses, which in due time conveyed them, tired and happy, home to Moneyrea after a very enjoyable day. The arrangements were in the capable hands of Miss Kennedy.

Ballee.—The annual business meeting was held on June 13th, the minister presiding. The Treasurer's Balance Sheet was presented for adoption by the congregation, and the necessary elections effected. A report of the year's work included reference to events which had brought the congregation together in fellowship. Whist Drives and a Cake, Produce, and Jumble Sale, had been successful financially and socially. An excursion to Belle Vue was held in the summer. Reference was made to special evening services held during the winter months, and to the work of the Sunday School under the superintendence of the minister. Thanks were given to the Choir and Church officers for their appreciated services during the year. A Library had been established for the use of Church members, and a gift of books received for the use of the Sunday School scholars. The fabric of the Church had received attention, and the Church windows had undergone extensive repairs. A cordial vote of appreciation and thanks to the minister was passed with acclamation.

Flower Services were held on June 26th. The Church was artistically decorated with flowers, and music and hymns appropriate to the occasion rendered. Miss E. Pratt officiated at the organ at the evening service. The Rev. J. Shaw Brown was the preacher at both services. His visit and addresses were much appreciated.

Raloo.—The annual Sunday School Pic-nic was held in the Manse field, on Saturday, July 16th. The children assembled in the afternoon; swings were put up in the trees in the Manse grounds, games started and tea provided. Late in the evening a drum and flute band arrived. Out on the road were ice-cream and sweetie stalls. A large crowd from far and near gathered up, and games and dances went on as long as the light permitted.

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION—ITS AIMS AND METHODS.

What is education? Oliver Wendell Holmes asked a class of children what they were there for. To learn, one of them replied. To learn what? he asked. How to behave, came the prompt reply. That was once widely thought to be the aim of education. Knowledge was a secondary matter, though useful as far as it went, but the aim of education was to do far more than to impart knowledge that would be useful in later life. An educated person was not a walking encyclopedia but one who knew how to behave. It may have been a limited view of the aim of education but it did realise the importance of character and conduct.

Huxley defined education as the training of the intellect in the laws of nature, and the fashioning of the affections and will into an earnest desire to live in harmony with those laws. When we think of education not only as the training of the intellect but also as the developing of the affections and will we are bordering on the realm of religion.

There have been as many views of what religion is as of education. Mr. H. B. Jacks says there is in the heart of the child that mysterious potency which we call the religious spirit but which Jesus called the Kingdom of Heaven, likening it to a seed sown secretly but containing within itself the power to grow into a tree.

The teacher's task is to tend and develop this seed, whose growth the hammer of controversy will crush and the shadow of institutionalism wither. He must get the child's point of view, forgetting his own vision of the subject and the Church he wants to fill. We believe profoundly in this mysterious potency in the heart of the child—the soul—and that like the seed to which it is compared, it will if put in the right surroundings and given the right nourishment, unfold and grow of itself. There is a certain confusion of thought in the idea of teaching religion as though it were knowledge that could be imparted rather than an inward experience which is to be communicated and a spiritual life which is to be quickened. When we think of religion as something to be taught we tend to identify it with creeds and doctrines—with the intellect rather than with the affections and will.

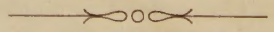
If the aim of religious education is to develop the religious spirit—how is it to be done? I think you will agree that it is not so much what it taught as the spirit in which it is taught. If the essence of religion is love for God and man, the influence of the teacher in whom this love dwells will count for more than anything that is taught.

Creeds change but love is eternal and the heart and soul of any real religion that ever was or will be. A great headmaster used to say I teach religion in all my classes. I suppose he was claiming that all education inspired by worthy aims and ideals seeks to develop what is best in the child — trains the mind to think and the heart to feel and the will to act—and is therefore religious in its aim. Also, I suppose it was a protest against a narrow arbitrary distinction between subjects that are religious and those that are not. It is not difficult to see how religion can be taught through history, nature and study or literature.

Nature study is an obvious road along which to bring children into the presence of the living God at work in His world but there are other roads along which we may travel to the same goal.

We ought never to forget that as Mr. H. B. Jacks says: God and religion are meaningless to a boy unless they are shown to him in visible form and at work in life.

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely and of good report, think on these things—set them before the child in concrete form, in noble examples, above all in the supreme example of Jesus whose life and words have still their ancient powers to kindle the noblest ideals, arouse the purest emotions and touch the life to finer issues.—Rev. F. Munford, B.A., at Banbridge S.S. Conference.



"Many there are who will die for Christ, but few there are who will live for Him." St .Augustine.

REVIEWS.

"The Band of Hope Chronicle;" "Liberal Christians and the Problem of Peace," by Rev. John C. Ballantyne, M.A.; "International Peace Campaign-Collective Security."

"Band of Hope Chronicle" records that at a public demonstration in the Caxton Hall, London, on May 10th, when it became necessary to close the doors before the meeting, as the hall was filled in every part, Mr. Angus Watson, presided, and remaked that.—"The split second is often a difference between life and death. Men are being called upon to think and act more quickly than ever before in the history of mankind. What is the most dangerous drink? Probably you would immediately reply brandy or whiskey; but: in that reply you would be mistaken. A public analyst in Birmingham has purchased six-pennyworth of each of the commonest forms of drink—whiskey, port, beer, stout and cider. And I confess I was one of the teetotallers who thought cider a comparatively innocuous drink. Yet here are the results: in six-pennyworth of whiskey you absorb 105 grains of alcohol. In port (six-pennyworth) 153 grains of alcohol. Stout (6d. worth) 169; beer (6d. worth) 402; cider, 425. So that brewers who are carrying on their present propaganda for beer, when they say 'beer is good for you' are telling a potent and demonstrable falsehood. Beer, in fact, for the same money value is nearly four times as dangerous as whiskey. I speak with a great sense or responsibility when I speak as a magistrate. I deal with cases of drunkenness nearly every week, and to me one of the most disturbing things that I have seen is the fact that a very large proportion of people who are charged are not old people or middle-aged people, but young people.

In "Liberal Christians and the Problem of Peace," the Rev. J. C. Ballantyne, M.A., defined a Liberal Christian "as one who believes in God as the Father of all mankind and sees all mankind as one in Him; and he believes in truth, justice and reason. The Pacifist Christian does the same.

In 1917, in the course of a series of articles in the "Inquirer," Mr. Ballantyne wrote:—"First must come truth, veracity, justice, integrity, righteousness. Establish these by victory of our arms, and then, on that basis build the Kingdom of Love." But soon after, he maintains he was completely baffled by the abandonment of moral standards, and at last came the decision: "to abandon the war method, and not to abandon the Liberal Christian Faith."

From his point of view, Mr. Ballantyne presents a very powerful appeal. But war and the possibility of war exists because war is always in the heart of mankind, even in what is considered peace, war against the animal kingdom, war against the beauty of Nature, the exploitation of the weaker by the stronger, and so long as this seething underground volcano exists, there are always liable to be violent eruptions.

"Collective Security"—International Peace Campaign publication:

Strategically, the danger is so obvious that it is difficult to understand the eagerness with which some of the most avowedly patriotic sections of the British people have desired the rebels' success ..... Spain's development into a military power with.....Facist ties....would be a potential threat not only to the French communications with her African colonies, but to Britain's power to control the Western outlet from the Mediterranean. A naval force could hardly be maintained at Gibralter in face of a hostile air force on the mainland.—"Times" Military correspondent. It is clear that the victory of Germany and Italy in Spain, may, by cutting vital arteries, mean the end of the British Commonwealth and of democratic Europe .....The tragedy of the Great War of 1914 was that if those who went to war with Germany had been able to say beforehand that they would resist her, the war might have been avoided."

THE COMMITTEE MAN—There should be some one who can say "no" to advisory committees. Committees may sometimes be under the domination of experts with particular enthusiasms. "Any man who is prepared to make himself an infinite nuisance can always get his way three times out of five." Dr. Temple, Archbishop of York.

HISTORICAL NOTES.

(By H. J. F. Orr.)

THE FIRST PRESBYTERY IN IRELAND.

The first Presbytery formed in Ireland dates from 10th June, 1642. The celebrated Rev. John Livingston was sent over from Scotland in April, 1642, "to wait on the Scottish Army" as he states. He staid for six weeks at Carrickfergus, the Army headquarters, and six weeks at Antrim, or its vicinity, apparently as Chaplain to a Scotch regiment stationed there. Not only did he act with the military as chaplain, but he preached in various places from time to time.

With other chaplains he arranged with regimental officers to erect sessions or elderships in four of the regiments then in Carrickfergus. Having constituted these, the ministers decided to form a meeting of Presbytery in accordance with the rules of the Church of Scotland.

Five ministers and four ruling elders attended. Revs. Baird, Pebles, Cunningham, Scott and Bird, no record of elders names. Apparently apologies were made for the absence of Livingston and a James Simpson, then in Newry. Dr. Reid in his history of the Presbyterian Church states that Simpson settled in charge of a congregation in Ulster, and thinks it was Newry. If like Livingston he devoted his spare time to preaching to civilians, Newry would be favourable. There would be likely some Presbyterians there. In the terrible 1641 Rebellion, Robert Lauson, a Derry merchant, and a member of a staunch Presbyterian family, left a narrative, how when on his way to Dublin, he was stopped at Newry and together with some of its townsmen, they fled to Downpatrick, and thence he came to Belfast, where he raised a small force to defend Lisburn.

John Baird was appointed to preach the sermon, taking his text from 51st Psalm 18 v., "Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion, build thou the walls of Jerusalem,"

Reid and Latimer both state that he was installed in 1646 in the Route, ignoring the fact that he was minister of 1st Belfast, 1642-1646..

Thos. Peebles was stationed at Newtownards with his regiment, but in 1645 became joint minister of Holywood and Dundonald; he was clerk of presbytery for 28 years.

Livingston was minister in Killinchy for some time, but according to Church records, the first meeting house built there was in 1670, so he must have had no regular preaching place.

As soon as the Presbytery was formed, many towns, which had Presbyterian congregations, asked that elderships should be erected and ministers settled regularly among them. Amongst these were Antrim, Cairncastle, Templepatrick Larne, Newtownards, Ballywalter; from the latter was later formed the Greyabbey congregation. And with these places having duly erected elderships, a formed Church came into being.

All these congregations were formed under the Church of Scotland, prior to the drawing up of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which dates from 25th September, 1643.

After Henry Cromwell returned to Ireland in 1655, he summoned a meeting of Presbyterian and Independent clergymen to arrange some uniform method of maintenance. A plan was adopted so that each would at least have £100 a year, but never carried out. From the historical point of view it was important, for a list was compiled of ministers, and so early records can be checked, and amended. There is a John Fleming, Ballee, 1655. Thos. Skelton, Newry, and Thos. Johns, Drogmore (Dromore), these may have been Independents, but it is interesting to have these names on record if only to show that services were conducted in these respective places at that time.

Should there upon a rose's face
A smile appear for you,
Your love for it would grow apace
And thrill you through and through.

Should lily speak with tender voice
And softly say "Hello!"
How greatly would your heart rejoice
That it should greet you so!

J.H.

PRIZE ESSAY—By Roberta Moore, Ballyclare.

"Should we have Flower-Sunday—and Why?"

How many people in the world, if they were asked if they liked flowers would answer "No." Indeed would there be any? Their appeal to everyone, rich or poor, young or old, is universal. The reasons are so many and varied that one could scarcely mention all. We can never see their wonderful beauty and their variety of colour and structure without thinking of the marvellous love and goodness of their Creator—God. To study even the simplest of wild flowers and to note its perfection of form and colour and to think of what a small part this is of all the millions of other, and more complicated species, makes one very dimly realise the spirit of our Father who can create all these to bring happiness and pleasure to His children. One way of making clearer this love of God is by having Flower-Sunday. We can actually see His work and feel nearer to Him. If we even try to think of a world without flowers, how terrible it is. Yet I wonder if we always appreciate them as we ought. Then also Flower-Sunday offers to us an opportunity of sharing our joy with those who are suffering in hospitals or homes where flowers are a luxury. We can always make brighter their lives by sending these flowers to them. Many lessons can be learned from the flowers. Each one has its own work to do in its own place and no matter how small or apparently insignificant the flower is, this work is as useful and important as the most (brightly) highly cultivated and cared for flower in the world. Many years ago a young man was thrown into prison and as he could not prove his innocence he was kept there for many months. During the day he walked round and round a small yard surrounded by a very high wall. One day he was walking as usual and thinking of his dear ones from whom he had been separated for so long. His eyes were fixed on the ground and all at once he dropped to his knees. The yard was paved with large stones and in a crack between two stones he saw two little leaves growing. From that moment he ceased to feel lonely. Something else was here with him. Day by day he carefully watered the little plant from his own scanty allowance. He dreaded lest his jailers should discover his treasure and take it away from him. However ,they did not, and the plant grew until there came a bud and then to the prisoner's weary but delighted eyes there appeared a little blue flower, the blue flower of hope. The pleasure which the flower brought to the man's sad heart is indescribable. It bloomed for a good while and then it began to wither but by that time new hope had come to the prisoner. He was to be tried again and this time his innocence was proved and he was set free. He told his wife and children about the wonderful little plant which had given him so much joy and kept his hope alive. How had the plant come there? Perhaps the wind had blown a seed from some garden, or it may be that it fell from the beak of a bird passing overhead but I think it was God who put it there to cheer a weary soul and to give fresh hope to one from whom hope had fled. One can never see a flower without a feeling of hopefulness as well as pleasure which encourages us to go on and to do our best, no matter how little it may be.

I certainly do think then that we ought to have a Flower-Sunday. First because it makes us realise more clearly the love and goodness of our Father and it should help us to try to do our part in God's world more cheerfully and bravely than we often do.

Secondly because we should learn unselfishness and thoughtfulness for others by bringing the flowers we love best to church and then giving them cheerfully to those who are ill or less fortunate than ourselves in having flowers.

Thirdly because flowers seem so close to God that they belong to His House and ought to be there, not only on Flower-Sunday but on every Sunday.

I think it would be a good idea if Flower-Sunday were to take the form of a Thanksgiving Service. We all look forward with pleasure to the Harvest Thanksgiving Services. We are all very

anxious that we should have enough flowers for decorating the church. Yet we always have enough. Would the decorations be anything at all without flowers? Again, how many flowers would there be if it were not for the sun and the showers God sends. Without either of these important things there would neither be crops nor flowers. I think, that every time we enter a garden we should say a little prayer of thankfulness to God since He is responsible for the joy we feel every time we look at a flower. It is Frank Lambert who says in his beautiful song:—

"The kiss of the sun for pardon,
The song of the birds for mirth,
One is nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth."

WARP AND WOOF.

"The millions of threads of the warp are the souls of men, and the one thread of the woof is the Life ofGod; the design woven on the loom is evolution, and the pattern after which it is woven is God's thought of a perfected world."

— The Unitarian and — Free Christian Men's League.

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND.

A MINISTER'S RESIGNATION.

The newspapers reported the resignation of a young minister, the Rev. Jas. Houston on Donageheady Presbyterian Church (County Tyrone). According to the "News Chronicle," Mr. Houston, on Sunday, June 26th, read his agreement with an Irish General Assembly Commission to go on six months' leave, resign before the end of the year, and vacate the Manse as soon as possible.

The congregation split three months ago over their minister's attitude to housing and wages. Owners of large farms, and their friends, formed a rebel church, Mr. Houston continuing with the majority of the congregation. The Commission ordered the closing of the rebel church, and all parties attended on June 26th. The agreement urged office-bearers to do their utmost to bring both sections of the congregation together in a spirit of unity.

Before beginning his sermon Mr. Houston said, "God save me from trying to make this an occasion by which you will remember me. I will not give way to the temptation to go out of this building with hatred and anger in my heart." After service Mr. Houston, and his wife and two children stood near the door and shook hands with the majority of the congregation.

Mr. H. Curry, a member of the congregation, said Mr. Houston's "offence" was that he tried to get fair play for working men, decent houses and fair wages.

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